

News from Ed Markey

United States Congress

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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October 29, 2002

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OVER 100 DEMS URGE BUSH TO KEEP AIR CLEAN

Washington, DC: Representative Edward J. Markey (D-MA), senior member of the House Energy and Commerce Committee and Resources Committee released a letter today, signed by over 100 Democrats urging President Bush to oppose the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) proposed changes to the New Source Review (NSR), which would fundamentally weaken the Clean Air Act.

Rep. Markey, "These changes to the enforcement of the Clean Air Act are unacceptable and endanger public health. We expect the EPA to protect our children from the pollution that fills their lungs with the poisons and particulates produced by power plants; not protect the thousands of plants and facilities from cleaning up their acts. We have the technology to protect health while providing energy efficiently – this is no time to compromise the well-being of children, the elderly and other vulnerable populations around and downwind from the smokestacks."

Twenty-six million Americans have been diagnosed with asthma and 8.6 million of them are under the age of 18. According to the Centers for Disease Control, nearly 120,000 premature deaths in the United States are can be attributed to outdoor air pollution. In Massachusetts alone, it is reported by the American Lung Association that 8.5% of the adult population has asthma, 1.3% above the national average.

"EPA used to stand for Environmental Protection Agency – now it just stands for Every Polluter's Ally." Rep. Markey concluded, "While he invokes the memory of Teddy Roosevelt, President Bush seems to be telling Americans "Speak Softly and Carry a Big Inhaler."

The EPA's proposed changes to the New Source Review would:

- Permit a facility to choose a baseline of emissions that would allow actual pollution to increase dramatically without triggering NSR requirements to upgrade pollution controls;
- Change the definition of routine maintenance, which will both substantially increase air pollution from existing sources, as well as jeopardize the important, ongoing NSR enforcement cases;
- Allow emissions to rise at any industrial facility, including power plants; and,
- Make it more difficult for states to limit air pollution and to meet tough new standards for fine particulate and ozone pollution.

You may find a copy of the letter to President Bush and other correspondence at www.house.gov/markey.

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